

CLAIMS

1. A method for caring for, especially cleaning of, dogs in a tub-like basin which accommodates the dog and has a perforated intermediate bottom as a standing area for the dog characterised in that according to the purpose of the treatment the basin is filled to such a level with water that at least the paws of a dog standing on the intermediate bottom are located in the water during the treatment, that an air supply system is acted upon with compressed air by a blower and air is blown into the water and distributed from a first branch of the air supply system arranged underneath the intermediate bottom through first air outflow openings, the pressure of said air being sufficient to remove dirt adhering to the paws by bubbling and without spraying, that after the cleaning phase the air pressure in the first branch, as long as it is immersed in the water, is maintained at least at a level which is sufficient for preventing dirt from penetrating into the air outflow openings, and that during a drying phase a second branch of the air supply system provided with at least one outlet opening for drying air is supplied with air.
2. The method according to claim 1, characterised in that the air pressure in the first branch is maintained during an after-run time sufficient for drying the opening region after the wetting of the first branch by water has ended.
3. The method according to claim 1, characterised in that the drying air emerging from the second branch is directed towards the dog by an air hose which can be guided by hand.

4. The method according to claim 1, characterised in that for the drying phase the intermediate bottom with the dog is raised above the surface of the water.
5. The method according to claim 3, characterised in that after the cleaning phase the basin is emptied and then during the drying phase the dog inside the basin is dried with the air flow emerging from the air hose, wherein at the same time during the drying phase the air outflow from the first branch is maintained.
6. The method according to claim 5, characterised in that during the drying phase a care product for the dog is added in a metered fashion to the air incoming via the first branch.
7. The method according to claim 1, characterised in that during the drying phase the air from the second branch is blown out through inwardly and obliquely downwardly directed outflow openings arranged in the upper area of the side walls of the basin.
8. The method according to claim 1, characterised in that the air conveyed by the blower is heated.
9. The method according to claim 1, characterised in that during the cleaning phase air is withdrawn from the basin via a feed pump which can be switched on and off and is supplied to a manually guidable water hose at such a sufficient pressure that it emerges from the hoses as a rinsing jet which is directed towards highly contaminated parts of the dog's body.
10. The method according to claim 9, characterised in that the water conveyed by the feed pump is passed through a dirt filter.

11. The method according to claim 1, characterised in that during the cleaning phase water is held continuously by a circulating pump in a circuit which passes through a dirt filter.
12. The method according to claims 5 and 9, characterised in that the basis is emptied into a collecting container via a closable fast-emptying opening and the feed pump sucks water out of the collecting container for filling the basin or using the water hose.
13. The method according to claim 9, characterised in that the feed pump sucks in the water via a dirt filter.
14. A device for caring for, especially cleaning dogs for implementing the method according to claim 1, comprising a tub-like basin (10) having a bottom (14) and a side wall extending upwards from this bottom (14) and comprising a perforated intermediate bottom (18) arranged inside the space enclosed by the basin (10) at a vertical distance from the basin bottom (14), characterised in that underneath the intermediate bottom (18) there is arranged a first branch (24) of an air supply system connected to a controllable blower (68) which is provided with air outlet openings (26) distributed uniformly over the base surface, which are directly laterally and/or downwards.
15. The device according to claim 14, characterised in that the air supply system comprises channels running in a horizontal plane with air outlet openings (26) opening to both sides.
16. The device according to claim 14, characterised in that manually guidable water hose (62) is provided which can be supplied with rinsing water from the

cleaning water located in the device via a dirt filter (67) and a feed pump (60) which can be switched on and off.

17. The device according to claim 14, characterised in that the basin (10) is incorporated in a circuit which passes via a circulating pump and a dirt filter.
18. The device according to claim 14, characterised in that a heating device (76) for heating the conveyed air is incorporated after the blower (58).
- ( ) 19. The device according to claim 16, characterised in that the blower (68) and heater (76) can be switched on and off together.
20. The device according to claim 14, characterised in that a second branch (34) of the air supply system which can be switched on and off separately is connected to the blower (68).
21. The device according to claim 18, characterised in that the second branch (34) of the air supply system has obliquely downwardly directed second air outlet openings (36) arranged in the upper region of the inside of the side wall of the basin (10).
22. The device according to claim 21, characterised in that the section of the second branch (34) of the air supply system having the second air outlet openings (36) is arranged such that it is adjustable in height.
23. The device according to claim 22, characterised in that this section is constructed as an adjustable-height frame running along the circumference of the basin (10).

24. The device according to claim 20, characterised in that the second branch (34) has a manually guidable air hose (38) which can be acted upon with air as desired.
25. The device according to claim 14, characterised in that a metering device (78) to deliver an additive into the air flow is connected to the first branch (24) of the air supply system.
26. The device according to claim 25, characterised in that the connection of the metering device (78) to the first branch (24) of the air supply system can be switched on and off.
27. The device according to claim 14, characterised in that a removable spray protection wall can be placed on the upper edge of the side wall of the basin (10) which grips over the inner edge region of the side wall with a baffle sleeve.
28. The device according to claim 14, characterised in that the intermediate bottom (18) is assigned a lifting device (42, 44, 46, 48) which is suitable for lifting the intermediate bottom from its base position associated with a cleaning phase into a position associated with a drying phase and keeping it there for a while.
29. The device according to claim 14, characterised in that a partition (79) matched in height to the body size of the dog can be attached above the intermediate bottom (18) in the longitudinal centre of the basin (10).
30. The device according to any one of claims 18 to 24, characterised in that a changeover valve (72) is

located downstream from the blower (68) which in a first position connects the blower (68) only to the second branch (24) and in a second position connects the blower to the first and the second branch (24, 34).

31. The device according to claim 14, characterised in that it is provided with a level sensor (82) which is suitable for emitting a first signal when an adjustable maximum filling height is reached in the basin (10) and emitting a second signal after leaving this maximum filling height as soon as the emptied state of the basin (10) is reached.
32. The device according to claim 31, characterised in that for signal transmission the level sensor (82) is connected to a control circuit (80) which is suitable for controlling at least the blower (68), possibly the heating (76), the duration of the cleaning and drying phase and possibly the function of the feed pump (60) for filling or emptying the basin (10) according to signals obtained from the level sensor (82) and from an adjustable time switch member (108).
33. The device according to claim 28, characterised in that it has a sensor associated with the intermediate bottom (18) which is suitable for delivering a signal when the water level and intermediate bottom come close before the air outlet openings (26) of the first branch (24) dip into the water and for switching on the action of air on the second branch by the signal.
34. The device according to claims 17 and 32, characterised in that the control circuit (80) is suitable for keeping the circulating pump in operation during a cleaning phase.

35. The device according to claims 30 and 31, characterised in that the control circuit (80) is suitable for switching over the changeover valve (72) into its position for supplying the second branch (34) after the end of the cleaning phase and into its other position before the beginning of the cleaning phase.
36. The device according to claims 32 and 25 or 26, characterised in that the metering device (78) can be switched on and off by the control circuit (80) jointly with the second branch (34) of the air supply system.
37. The device according to claims 14 to 36, characterised in that the first branch (24) of the air supply system is connected to the intermediate bottom (18) at a distance from its underside.
38. The device according to claim 37, characterised in that the intermediate bottom (18) consists of a platform having perforations (180) for the passage of air on whose underside a region of the first branch of the air supply system having the air outlet openings is arranged at a distance therefrom, said region comprising pipe sections (22) parallel to one another with laterally and/or obliquely downwardly directed air outlet openings (26).
39. The device according to claim 38, characterised in that the intermediate bottom (18) is composed of a group of base elements (118) parallel to one another.
40. The device according to claim 28, characterised in that lifting elements (132, 134; 164, 166) for the intermediate floor (18) which can be moved synchronously vertically up and down by a central drive device (138) are arranged in the substantially

rectangular basin (10) in plan view, in the four corners.

41. The device according to claim 40, characterised in that vertically arranged, rotationally drivable threaded spindles (156) are arranged in the four corners of the basin (10), which each engage in a nut (164) fixedly connected to a supporting frame (166) for the intermediate bottom (18).
42. The device according to claim 41, characterised in that each threaded spindle (156) bears a chain wheel (158) and these chain wheels (158) are in drive communication amongst one another and with the drive device by a continuous chain (160).
43. The device according to claim 42, characterised in that the chain wheels (158) are arranged in the area of the upper end of the threaded spindles (156).
44. The device according to claim 43, characterised in that the chain wheels (58) and the chain (160) which connects them are covered by a covering hood (162) which grips over the upper edge of the basin.
45. The device according to claim 41, characterised in that the threaded spindles (156) are self-cleaning rolled threaded spindles.
46. The device according to claim 41, characterised in that the spindles (156) are in engagement with plastic nuts.
47. The device according to claim 40, characterised in that vertical pillars (126) associated with one another in pairs are arranged in the four corners of the basin, that a horizontal rod (134) extends through

the basin (10) respectively between the two pillars (126) of one pair, said rod being affixed to an element (132) which can be moved vertically up and down on the column (126) by a drive (138), wherein the two elements (132) of each pair are coupled to the drive (138) such that the two parallel rods (134) are in each case at the same height and that the intermediate bottom (18) is prepared on its sides facing the rods (134) for detachable supporting on respectively one of the rods (134).

48. The device according to claim 47, characterised in that the pillars (126) are shaped as hollow profiles having a rectangular cross-section, in whose interior a rack (132) in engagement with a driving pinion is guided such that it slides up and down, wherein the ends of each rod (134) engage through a vertical slot (128) in the hollow profile into the two pillars (126) allocated thereto and are fixedly connected to the rack (132) at that point.
49. The device according to claims 47 or 48, characterised in that the drive (138) is associated with one of the pillars (126) and is connected to the driving pinions on the other pillars using means for slip-free transmission of movement.
50. The device according to claim 41, characterised in that a spray protection (148) can be detachably connected to a retaining clamp and the retaining clamp detachably affixed to the vertically moveable supporting frame (166) such that in its lowest position it is lowered as far as the area of the basin edge.
51. The device according to claim 48, characterised in that the racks (132) are each provided at their upper

end with a holder (146) which penetrates through the slot (128) for a detachable spray protection (148) which can be connected thereto.

52. The device according to claim 40, characterised in that a covering hood is assigned to the basin as spray protection.

53. The device according to claim 40, characterised in that a filling line associated with the basin (10) contains a check valve which can be switched into a locking position by a sensor (182) moveable jointly with the supporting frame (166) as soon as the sensor dips into the water and that markings associated with one another are applied to the vertically movable equipment part (166, 18) on the one hand and to the fixed equipment part (10; 126) on the other hand, on which the water level corresponding to the respective sensor position can be read off.

54. The device according to claim 53, characterised in that the circuit of the check valve is configured such that this stays closed after the transfer to the locking position triggered by the sensor (182) until it is released for opening again by an arbitrary control command.

55. The device according to claim 40, characterised in that it is fitted with a device (184, 186) for showering the dog.

56. The device according to claim 55, characterised in that the device is provided with a fixedly installed shower device which comprises two ring lines (184, 186) each running in a horizontal plane along the basin edge at different levels, wherein the lower ring line(186) is provided with upwardly sloping spray

nozzles and the upper ring line (186) is provided with downwardly sloping spray nozzles (188, 190).

57. The device according to claim 40, characterised in that a second sensor which responds to the water filling and is arranged vertically underneath the air outlet openings (26'), is moveable together with the supporting frame (166) which is suitable for switching on the supply of blower air to the air outlet openings before the air outlet openings dip into the water filling of the basin (10) during the downward movement of the supporting frame.
58. The device according to claim 14, characterised in that the intermediate bottom (18) with the part (22) of the air supply system having the air outlet openings (26) associated with it and possibly with a lifting device (42, 44, 46, 48) used for its vertical motion is arranged as a removable unit (12) in the basin (10).